

THE
 Bishop of *Oxford's*
 CHARGE,
 CONSIDER'D,

In Reference to *Q, R, K*

The Independency of the Church upon
 the State.

A Proper Sacrifice in the Sacrament of
 the Lord's-Supper.

The Nature and Necessity of Sacer-
 dotal Absolution. And,

The Invalidity of Baptism, Administred
 by Persons not Episcopally Ordain'd.

In an Humble ADDRESS to
 His LORDSHIP.

By the AUTHOR of *Lay-Baptism Invalid.*

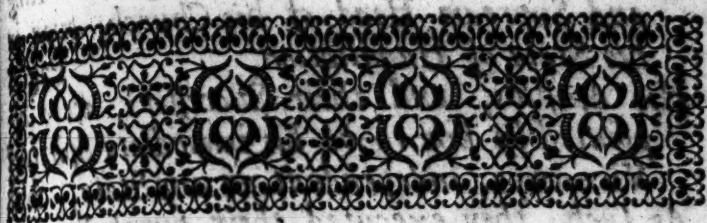
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THE
Bishop of Oxford's
CHARGE
CONSIDERED

In Reference to
The Independence of the Church from
the State.
A Proper Subject in the Government of
the Church.
The Nature and Extent of State
Interference.
The Invalidity of Episcopal Ordination
by Persons not in Holy Orders.
In the Humble Opinion of
His Lordship

JOSEPH ALCOCK

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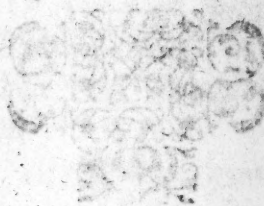
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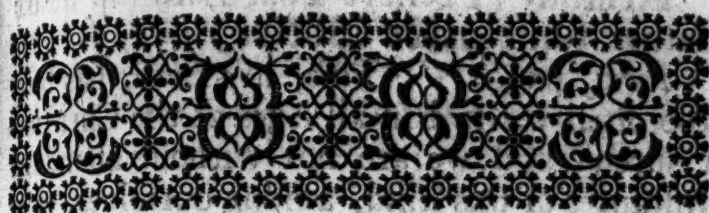
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THE
Bishop of Oxford's
CHARGE,
CONSIDER'D, &c.

My LORD,



IS a very just Observation which *Introduc-*
Your Lordship makes, and to *tion.*
which all good Men will read-
ily agree, " That when Men
" once take the Liberty of de-
" parting from their Rule,

" no one knows whither they may go at last;
" and there are hardly any things so absurd,
" which the weakest Judgment, or warmest Ima-
" gination can advance, but some People will be
" found, who being led either by the Novelty
" of the Notions, or Admiration of the Per-
" sons, of the Authors, or by some other
B " Reason,

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“ Reason, (I believe Your Lordship means rather ~~some other~~ ~~Positive~~) *easily fall into* “ *them*, pag. 8. ” This, my Lord, has been too often verified in all Ages of the Christian Church; and we are not without abundant Instances of this kind, among ourselves, even since the Reformation of our Church from the Corruptions of Popery.

“ *The way to cure and hinder this* (as Your Lordship excellently advises) *is, to keep* “ *close to the Doctrines of our Church, as* “ *they are taught in her Creeds, Homilies,* “ *Articles, and Catechisms, and explain'd in* “ *her Offices*, pag. 9. ” These, my Lord, are certainly good Explanations of our Church's Doctrine; and we may doubtless “ *keep close to* them without any Danger of “ *departing from* “ *our Rule*: ” But there is not the same Security in adhering to her Doctrines, as “ *explain'd* “ *in the Writings of* (some of her reputedly) “ *Learned and Orthodox Divines from the* “ *Reformation*, pag. 9. ” because, by so doing, we shall, *through* *Admiration of their Per-* “ *sons*, ” be made to depart from many necessary Truths, and to fall into dangerous and destructive Novelties: For, 'tis but too notorious, that some of them, who have been cry'd up for their Learning and Orthodoxy by a particular Party, have, by their Novel way of illustrating, endeavour'd to explain away, the natural Sense and Meaning of our Church's Doctrine, in her most Excellent *Creeds, Homilies, Articles, Catechism, and Offices*; this they have done to make us have kinder

The Introduction.

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kindier thoughts, than ever our Church design'd we should entertain, concerning the Doctrines and Practices of *Schismatical* and *Seditious Seperatists* from our Church's Communion: And all under the Notion of a *false Charity* to great Numbers of Men, who, by a *just Explanation* of our Church's Doctrine, are unavoidably involv'd in the dreadful Guilt of Heresy, Schism and Rebellion. The Instances of these Sort of Expositors, are too numerous to be conceal'd; and the Particulars of their Names, too well known for me to inform the World of them. I don't mention this to derogate from the Worth of those Explanations, which many of our truly Orthodox and Learned Divines (who have *always* approved themselves to be such) have given us of our Church's Doctrine; nor do I design, by this Observation, to detract from the Worth of Your Lordship's Advice, to *keep close* to *such wholesome and just* Explanations as theirs most certainly are; but I do it, to shew with what *caution* we should receive the Explanations of our Church's Doctrines, as deliver'd to us by some Men of Reputation, who have been very much *celebrated* by a particular Set of Men among us for their *Learning* and *Orthodoxy*; and have yet, whether through *Heedlesness* or *Design* I shall not determine, discover'd their great *Partiality*, in Favour of erroneous Principles and dangerous Practices, even contrary to the *Rule* set them by Christ and His Church.

The Introduction.

“ I lament (with Your Lordship) the great
 “ Numbers of People who have been, and are
 “ separated from our Communion, and form’d
 “ into several Sects of various Denominations,
 “ by the Artifices of Priests (Your Lordship
 means Romish Priests) and Jesuits, who at
 “ first crept in unawares among them. And
 I should heartily rejoice to see Your Lordship’s
 good Wish fulfill’d, “ That those who are un-
 “ happily engag’d in those Separations, would
 “ seriously consider who first began them, and
 “ whose work they are doing by keeping them
 “ up, pag. 2, & 3.”

But, my Lord, have we good Evidence
 that the Romish Priests and Jesuits have shew’d
 themselves of late so great Masters in this
 Sort of Policy, “ That they have divided the
 “ Members, and even the Ministers of our own
 “ Communion into Parties, under odious Cha-
 “ racters of Distinction? And, that they have
 “ rais’d such Animosities and Jealousies among
 “ them, that some seem to have less favourable
 “ Thoughts of their Brethren that differ from
 “ them in Matters of small Moment, or
 “ of purely a Political Consideration,
 “ than of their Common Enemies, who, by their
 “ cunning Craftiness, whereby they lie in wait
 “ to deceive, have made the Differences among
 “ them? pag. 3.” Is it not rather too true,
 my Lord, that such Romish Emissaries have
 had no occasion to exert such their pernicious
 Skill, to divide the Ministers and Members of
 our Communion from one another, while
 they saw plainly enough, that we had many
 among

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among ourselves as dexterous, and as ready as any of them to effect that Mischief without their Assistance? Is it not too evident by the Preaching and Writing of some who hold Communion with us, that the Cause of these Divisions lies in the Teaching and Publishing of *Anti-Episcopal*, and *Anti-Monarchical* Principles, by those among ourselves, who would be angry if we should say, they are not *True Church-Men*; while they openly excuse, and also promote the Cause of Schismatical and Rebellious Republican Separatists? How can it be prov'd, my Lord, that our Differences are in *Matters of small Moment*; when, if we come to Particulars, it cannot be deny'd, but that they are of the *highest Consequence*? Are we not divided about the *Validity of Ordinations and Sacraments*; The Powers of the Church; The Authority of Christ, vested in Bishops and Priests; The Power of Sacerdotal Absolution; The Sacrifice of Christ's Representative Body and Blood at the Altar; The Obligation which lies upon the People, to submit to their Spiritual Governours, the Bishops, and to obey the wholesome Laws they make for the Worship of God, and the good Regimen of his Church; The Duty of Subjects to their Sovereigns; and, The Indispensible Obligation they lie under, not to rise up in Arms against, nor dethrone their Princes, God's Civil Vicegerents, upon any Pretext whatsoever? Are not these Things more than of a purely *Political Nature*? Are they not *Matters of exceeding great Moment*,
upon

The Independency

upon which our Salvation very much depends? Are not some of them of that Consequence, that the very Being, Peace and Quiet of all Government, is included in them? And, are not others of them of so Spiritual a Nature, and of so great Importance, as that in them the very Being of a Church, and its well Being too, do mainly if not wholly consist?

The Independency of the Church upon the State.

§. I. Your Lordship has melancholy Apprehensions “ of the Consequences of some Doctrines and Notions that have been lately started, and warmly asserted in this Kingdom, pag. 9. Such (says Your Lordship) are some Doctrines savouring too much of Popery, asserting the Independency of the Church upon the State, which overthrow the Foundation upon which the Reformation proceeded; are repugnant to the 37th of our Articles, and the 1st and 2d of our Canons of 1603.

Here, my Lord, some will not readily distinguish, but be apt to believe, that Your Lordship gives Your Clergy to understand, that some have lately started, and warmly asserted, The Popish Doctrine of the Church's Independency; for Your Lordship puts no Limits to the word Independency, but leaves it at large, and makes it an Instance of a Doctrine “ savouring too much of Popery.” But pray, my Lord, is it not necessary to distinguish between the Popish Doctrine of Independency, and that which has been lately taught among us? Does not the World know, that

that the Popish Tenet of the Church's Independency on the State, endeavours to wrest the Civil Sword out of the Supreme Magistrate's Hand, and claims a *Supremacy* over the State, as well as an *Independency* on it, both in Matters Spiritual and Temporal too? Has such a Doctrine as this been lately taught among us by any of our Communion? We have Instances enough of Fanatick Teachers among our Separatists, who have taught this Doctrine; But who are they of our Church that have but once aim'd at it? 'Tis fit they should be discover'd, if any, that we may know and avoid them.

§. II. No, my Lord, our Church Teachers of the Doctrine of the Independency, have limited the Sense of it like dutiful Subjects: They have expressly taught, That the Church is Independent on the State, only in Matters purely Spiritual; and that she is subject to it in all Temporal Matters: That her Power, with respect to the former, she receives only from Christ, the Supreme Head of the Church; and that in the latter, she must be subject to the Higher (Civil) Power, *not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience-sake*. Sure, my Lord, if this Savours of Popery; our Lord Jesus Christ, His Holy Apostles, and the Whole Primitive Church, for above 300 Years together, both in Doctrine and Practice, promoted Popery.

§. III.

§. III. Our Lord, in his State of Humiliation, was the Spiritual King of his Church by Donation from his Father, Independent of any State whatsoever: Tho' his Kingdom was not of *this World*, it was *in it*; and even when he stood before *Pontius Pilate*, the Secular Judge, and with *Passive Obedience*, acknowledg'd his Civil Power over him; he at the same time asserted himself to be a King in direct Answer to *Pilate's* Question to him, "*Art thou a King then?*" And sure, as such, he was Independent on *Pilate*, tho' subject to him in Civil Matters. And, indeed, we find that he acted accordingly; for he appointed the Spiritual Officers of his Spiritual Kingdom, and gave them Authority to act under him, their *Lord and Master*, without asking leave of the *Jewish or Roman State*: And they obey'd his Orders, and put in Execution his Commission, without any dependance, but on him alone, while he was with them. And when he was about to "*leave the World*," that this *his Kingdom* here on Earth might not cease, he bequeath'd it to *his Apostles*, as his Father had given it unto him, that they might, in his stead, during his Personal Absence, *sit on Spiritual Thrones, judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel, i. e.* the whole Spiritual Israel of God, the Church of Christ. And it is Matter of Fact, pursuant to the Right which our Lord, the Supreme Head of the Church, gave them, that they exercis'd their Spiritual Power Independent on any earthly Prince or Potentate,

as the Scripture sufficiently testifies; and, that Christ promis'd to concur with their and their Successors Exercise thereof, as his *immediate Deputies* and Vice-roys in his Spiritual Kingdom, without limiting them herein to depend on Worldly Powers, *always even to the End of the World.* And 'tis evident to all Men diligently reading Ecclesiastical History, that the Primitive Church exercis'd her purely Spiritual Power Independent on the State, not only while it was Heathen, during the Three First Centuries, but also when, and after it became Christian: So long as her Zeal, for the Honour of her Lord and his Authority, was Warm and Fervent, and not supplanted by *Laodicean* Lukewarmness and Worldly Mindedness.

§. IV. And sure, my Lord, can this be said to be repugnant to our 37th Article, and the 1st and 2d Canons? Certainly it is reasonable to ask, Does our 37 Article give more to Princes than Christ himself has given to them? "*It gives them the Chief Power in— their Dominions—the Chief Government of all Estates of their Realms, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil;* and tho' it says, *In all Causes;* yet the following Words of the Article plainly prove, That *all Causes* must be taken in a *restrain'd*, not in an unlimited Sense: And it calls those by the Name of "*Slandrous Folks,* who, in the Days that it was made, put such an unbounded Sense upon
C the

The Independency

the Words. " And says, " *We give not to*
" our Princes the Ministring either of God's
" Word, or of the Sacraments— but that
" only Prerogative, which we see to have
" been given always to all godly Princes in
" Holy Scriptures by God himself;" and what
 that only Prerogative is, the Article ex-
 plains thus, " *That is, that they should Rule*
" all Estates and Degrees committed to their
" Charge by God, whether they be Ecclesiastical
" or Temporal; and restrain with the Civil
" Sword, the Stubborn and Evil Doers."
 Plainly giving them only that Prerogative
 which has always been given to them, *i. e.* a
Temporal one; for if there have been Spiritual
 Prerogatives sometimes given in Scripture to
 particular Godly Princes, yet they have not
 been given always to all of them. We are told
 by some, of Examples of a Spiritual Power
 and Authority peculiar to Priests given by
 God to Princes, as to David and Solomon;
 but if this were true, yet even those Princes
 had such Powers, only (*jure Prophetico*) as
 extraordinary Prophets, and not as ordinary
 Kings. Such Powers the Article does not
 give to Princes; but " that only **Prero-**
gative which was given always to all,"
 not sometimes to some, " Godly Princes."
 And the Article is so cautiously worded, as
 to name some Spiritual Powers which Princes
 have not; and thereby abundantly teaches
 us, that those who have them are not depen-
 dent on Princes for them. And doubtless,
 the Sense of the First and Second Canons con-
 tains

of the CHURCH, &c.

II.

tains nothing to the contrary, if we would have them and the 37th Article be believ'd to be consistent with each other, as they most certainly are; whatsoever Interpretations have by some been put upon them.

§. V. For the Design of the First Canon is, wholly to exclude all Foreign Power over our Princes, and to assert, that their Power within their Realms, is the "*Highest Power under God, to whom all Men, as well Inhabitants, as Born within the same, do, by God's Laws, owe most Loyalty and Obedience afore and above all other Powers and Potentates in the Earth:*" This, as to the Persons over whom our Sovereigns have Power, they are all without Exception, either Inhabitants, or Born in their Realms, whether Civil or Ecclesiastical Persons; no Foreign Power has any Authority over them. And then in what Causes Ecclesiastical this Supremacy of our Princes does consist, the 2d Canon determines, *viz.* That our Kings have "*the same Authority in Causes Ecclesiastical that the Godly Kings had amongst the Jews, and Christian Emperors of the Primitive Church,*" i. e. as the 37th Article expresses it, "*That only Prerogative, which we see to have been given always, to all Godly Princes, &c.*" as before remark'd. This the Popish Doctrine of the Church's unlimited Independency on the State directly opposes, by setting up the Bishop of Rome as a Supreme Sovereign over, and Judge of, Princes

in Matters Spiritual and Temporal; And, on the contrary, this Supremacy of our Princes, as taught in the 37th Article, and 1st and 2d Canons, is not oppos'd, but maintain'd by our Asserters of the Church's Independency on the State, in Matters purely Spiritual, as may be abundantly seen in their Writings; if Men will but be so just to themselves as seriously to peruse them,

*The Sa-
crifice of
Bread and
Wine at the
Christian
Altar.*

§. VI. The next Doctrine Your Lordship is pleas'd to take notice of as "*savouring too much of Popery, and that has been lately started, and warmly asserted in this Kingdom,*" is, That of a **Proper Sacrifice** in the *Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.*" The Consistency whereof, "*with the 31st Article, and with the Office for the Communion, and the Opinions of our best Divines in their Controversial Writings against the Church of Rome upon their Doctrine of the Sacrifice of the Mass;*" Your Lordship leaves Your Clergy "*to determine, by comparing them together, pag. 10.*" Here, I hope, my Lord, it will not be Presumption in a Layman, humbly to ask Your Lordship's Meaning of a **Proper Sacrifice**? For it has been taken in a very different Acceptation of the word *Proper*. If Your Lordship would have us to understand by *Proper Sacrifice*, a *Self-sufficient, intrinsically Perfect, Self-meritorious Sacrifice*, offer'd to God in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; then, my Lord, Your Clergy will have nothing at all to take into their

their Consideration about its Inconsistency with the 31st Article; for our Asserters of the Sacrifice of the Christian Altar, never taught any such Doctrine; If they had, they would not only have been Popishly inclin'd, their Doctrine would not only have savoured of Popery, but would have been Popery itself; for 'tis one of the peculiar Corruptions of the Church of Rome, that it teaches this Doctrine, in Consequence of their Notion of Transubstantiation—against which sort of Proper Sacrifice our 31st Article is expressly levell'd: And Your Lordship's Clergy would have been much oblig'd for Your Lordship's discovery of any One of our Writers that had started, and warmly asserted such a Doctrine, if any of them had done so. In this Sense of a Proper Sacrifice, there never was but one Proper Sacrifice, in the World, my Lord, and that was, *The Sacrifice of the Real Body and Blood of Christ at his Death.* This Proper Sacrifice was but once offer'd; and in Comparison of this, not One of the Jewish or Patriarchal Sacrifices was a Proper Sacrifice, they had nothing in them of intrinsic Worth or Value to take away Sin: And therefore, in this exalted Sense, were not Proper Sacrifices, any more than that of Bread and Wine at the Christian Altar.

§. VII. But then, if by *Proper Sacrifice*, Your Lordship means something Material offer'd to God, and by Divine Institution appointed to represent to him, the one only Proper,

Proper, Meritorious Sacrifice of the Death of his Son: If Your Lordship designs such a *Sacrifice* as is *Representative* of the Sacrifice of Christ's Death, and calls this a *Proper Sacrifice*, then, my Lord, 'tis acknowledg'd, that such a Proper Sacrifice, in this Secondary Sense, has been taught, and not only *warmly asserted*, but firmly prov'd to be offer'd to God in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood; and that this Sacrifice is as Proper a Sacrifice offer'd to God, as any of the *Jewish Sacrifices* were. The Inconsistency of this *Proper Sacrifice*, with what some of our Controversial Writers have hastily said against another Pretended Sacrifice of the Mass, is nothing to the purpose; so long as it is not Inconsistent with the 31st Article of our Church. The Articles are founded upon the Great Rule of Holy Scripture; but some Controversial Writers have often swerv'd from that sure Rule: And besides, we shall be apt to differ, concerning who have been the best Writers against the *Romish Sacrifice* of the Mass, when some of our most celebrated Divines have, even in that Controversy, acknowledg'd, nay and prov'd too, the *Representative Sacrifice* in the Lord's Supper; and will therefore be esteem'd by Your Lordship's Opponents, to have been the best Writers upon that Dispute.

§. VIII. I shall therefore only transcribe here the 31st Article itself, and make a few Remarks thereon; that the Consistency of this

this Doctrine with it, may plainly appear. It runs thus: The Title is, "*Of the One Oblation of Christ finished upon the Cross.*" The Article is, "*The Offering of Christ once made, is, that Perfect Redemption, Propitiation, and Satisfaction, for all the Sins of the Whole World, both Original and Actual; and there is none other Satisfaction for Sin, but that alone. Wherefore, the Sacrifices of Manes, in which it was commonly said, that the Priest did offer Christ for the Quick and the Dead, to have Remission of Pain or Guilt, were Blasphemous Fables, and Dangerous Deceits.*" In all which 'tis evident at first Sight, that this Article asserts, The Offering of Christ once made, to be that One Only Self-sufficient Sacrifice which had an intrinsick Value and Worth in it self to take away Sin; and therefore the Article calls it, *Perfect Redemption, Propitiation, and Satisfaction*; and says, "*That there is none other Satisfaction for Sin, but that alone;*" for indeed there never was any other: Because 'twas impossible that the Blood of Bulls, or of Goats, or indeed any other the most Excellent Material Offerings under the Patriarchal, Jewish, or Christian Dispensation, should take away Sins, i.e. by their own intrinsick Worth and Merit; but yet, by Divine Institution, they were made Types and Representations of Christ's Sacrifice, and, as such, the Means of procuring Remission: So that the Article's saying, there is *none other* Satis-

Satisfaction for Sin, does not signifie, that there are no other Means of Remission of Sin; for there are others under the Christian Dispensation, viz. Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Priestly Absolution, by Divine Appointment: But the true Sense of "*there is none other Satisfaction*," is, that there is nothing but the Death of Christ that has any real intrinsic Value in it self, adequate to the Righteous Demands of *Infinite Justice*, to take away Sin; for which reason the Church makes use of the word *Satisfaction*, to express the Inestimable, Self-sufficient Merit of that Price, which was of full and perfect Value, and therefore fit and exactly proper for the Divine Wisdom and Justice to accept of for the Redemption of Sinners.

§. IX. And 'tis only for this reason that the Article condemns the "*Sacrifices of Masses*," for *Blasphemous Fables*, and *Dangerous Deceits*," because the *Romanists* pretend, that *Christ* is again really offer'd to God in those Sacrifices; that his very Body and Blood are substantially (and not representatively) there Present at their Altars, and offer'd to God daily by the Priests for the Sins of the World; making thereby these their pretended Sacrifices of *Christ's Real Body and Blood*, equal in Worth and Value to *His own Oblation of Himself*, which he offer'd but once upon the Altar of the Cross: This is Blasphemy with a witness; but what has all this to do with the Doctrine of that Sacrifice, of *real Bread* and

and Wine, which has been lately reviv'd, and convincingly taught, and prov'd, by the Excellent Writers of our Church? Do they teach that this Sacrifice is, "*That Perfect Redemption, Propitiation, and Satisfaction for all the Sins of the Whole World, &c.*" which the Article speaks of? or, do they say, That it is *Another Satisfaction* for Sin, besides that *One Perfect Satisfaction*, which Christ made once upon the Cross, to Divine Justice; as the Church of Rome says, their Sacrifice of the Mass is? No, my Lord, our Writers have taught no such Doctrine, but the direct contrary, viz. That the Christian Sacrifice of Bread and Wine, has no real intrinsick Worth or Excellency in itself; That it is only a *Sacrifice Representative of Christ's One Meritorious Sacrifice of himself*, as the Jewish Sacrifices were *only Types* thereof, and not Proper *Satisfactions* in themselves to propitiate the Divine Nature; That its whole *Worth and Value* is owing only to Divine Institution, as that of the Jewish Sacrifices was; and, That it is only a Sacrifice or Offering made to God, to put him in mind (as it were) of the All-sufficient Sacrifice of his Son, to beseech him, for the Sake thereof, and of that *only*, to be Propitious and Merciful to us, and to express our unfeigned Thankfulness and Gratitude for the Infinite Benefit of our Redemption, purchas'd by the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ: This directly overthrows the Popish pretended Sacrifice of Christ's Real Body and Blood in the Mass; the very Nature of

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it is such, that it highly agrees with, and constantly expresses the Sense of our 31st Article, That "*there is none other Satisfaction for Sin, but that alone,*" which was made by the Death of Christ, once upon the Cross; because this Sacrifice of Bread and Wine, is only a Representation (not the Reality) of that Satisfaction which the Article speaks of: And therefore is no ways inconsistent with that Article of our Church.

§. X. As neither is it in any respect contradictory to, but exactly agreeable with, our Office for the Communion; because after the Offertory is made, the Priest (not a Lay-Clerk, or Sexton, as 'tis now scandalously practis'd, contrary to the Church's Order) is expressly commanded by the Rubrick, *to place upon the Table the Bread and Wine*: After which done, he is oblig'd *to beseech God, most Mercifully, to accept* those same Oblations, or Offerings of Bread and Wine. In the Prayer for the Whole Estate of Christ's Church, these of placing Material Oblations before God upon *his Table*, and beseeching him to *accept them*, are Sacrificial Acts peculiar to the Priest; and these Material Elements, being referr'd to in the word *Oblations*, is an invincible Proof, that they are offer'd to God, because he is beseech'd to *accept* them. In the Prayer of Address before the Consecration, and in the Rubrick thereto belonging, the Communion Table is call'd, *The Lord's Table*, in Conformity to Scripture Stile, which gave the
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Name of *Table of the Lord*, to that Table or Altar whereon any thing was offer'd to him; so that here we have another Instance, which implies, that the Bread and Wine, on that Table, are an Offering made to God: Again, The Bread and Wine are call'd, *God's Creatures*; his, not by Creation only, but also as they have relation to his Acceptation of them, upon the Priest's Prayer for that purpose, to him: So that they are God's Creatures in a double Respect, that of his having created them, and also of his having *accepted* of them at the Priest's Request.

§. XI. Further; The whole Consecration of them, is an Address (*to Almighty God our Heavenly Father*) continued still speaking to God, and representing to him what our Saviour did and said, when he took Bread and Wine, and call'd the *Bread his Body, or the Representation of his Body, given for us*; and the *Wine his Blood, i. e. the Representation of his Blood, shed for the Remission of Sins*. The Priest, in Consecrating, makes a Memorial before God of our Saviour's Words and Actions, when he appointed Bread and Wine to represent the Sacrifice of his Body crucified, and his Blood shed for our Sins; for the Priest takes the Bread into his Hands, and breaks it, as Christ did: He not only performs these Actions before God, but he also remembers God that Christ did so too; he likewise puts God in mind, that Christ gave it to his Disciples, saying, "*Take, Eat, this is my Body*"

The Sacrifice

“ *which is given for you, &c.* ” Then the Priest takes the Cup into his Hand, in the Divine Presence, as Christ did, and declares, as a Memorial to God, that Christ “ *took the Cup, and when he had given Thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this, for this is my Blood of the New Testament (or Covenant) which is shed for you, and for many, for the Remission of Sins, &c.* ” By all which, viz. Bread and Wine taken into the Priest’s Hands, the Actions perform’d, which Christ perform’d, and the Words spoken, which Christ spoke, the Priest in Christ’s stead, puts God in mind, as it were, of the *alone Sufficient Sacrifice* of our Lord’s Death once offer’d; and by thus representing it to the Divine Majesty, pleads that the Benefit of that “ *Full, Perfect, and Sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation and Satisfaction for the Sins of the Whole World,* ” may be particularly apply’d to the Soul of every Worthy Communicant: These Elements, Words and Actions, thus exhibited before God, are call’d by the Name of “ *our Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving,* ” by our Church’s Prayer in the Post-Communion. For that the Sacrifice here spoken of, is not a bare Figurative Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving in Words and Thoughts only, is plain from hence, That “ *this our Sacrifice,* ” must have a Reference to the whole Divine Service, here offer’d to God by way of Thanksgiving; and this Service contains in it, as we have seen before, an Oblation of Bread and Wine, and a Memorial

memorial of Christ's Death, offer'd to God by the Priest's consecrating those Elements, performing the same Manual Ceremonies, and speaking the same Words, before God, as Christ himself did: This is a Material Sacrifice of *Praise and Thanksgiving*; because, by these Elements and Actions offer'd to God, in remembrance of Christ's Death, the Priest expresses our Faith and Confidence, in the Death of Christ; our Trust, in God's Mercy, through the Merits of that Death; our Joy and Glory, in so great a Redemption; and, our Gratitude and Praise, to his Infinite Mercy, for the same. Thus it is plain, that this Sacrifice, Commemorative and Representative of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ, is no ways inconsistent to, but highly agreeable with, our 31 Article, and Communion Office; that it has nothing of Popery in it, but is directly destructive of the false Doctrine of Transubstantiation, and consequently of the false Sacrifice of the Popish Mass; and therefore has nothing in it that does so much as Savour of corrupt Popery: which I might also confirm by the Institution in Holy Scripture; the most Ancient and Purest Liturgies of Christ's Church; the Ancient Canons of Councils; and, the constant uninterrupted Doctrine and Practice of the pure Primitive Church: But this has been so unanswerably well done already by the Reverend and Learned Dr. *Hickes*, and some others, vastly beyond what my poor Abilities can

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can pretend to, that I shall not presume to say any thing more upon this Excellent Subject, after such great Masters as they have shew'd themselves to be, in Defence of this Catholick (tho', now among the Reform'd, wretchedly neglected) Doctrine.

The Nature and Necessity of Priestly Absolution.

§. XII. Another Doctrine Your Lordship takes notice of, as *savouring too much of Popery*; is, That of “*asserting the Necessity of Sacerdotal Absolution for the Remission of the Sins, even of the Penitent; and that the Penitent, according to the Christian Covenant, cannot expect Remission, without this Sacerdotal Absolution, as a Condition ordinarily necessary: That Repentance and Conversion, cannot blot out Sins without it. This indeed (says Your Lordship) is agreeable to the Doctrine of the Church of Rome; But where do's our Church teach it, or require it, in any of her Offices?* p. 10. 11.

Upon which, my Lord, give me leave to ask, Has not Christ establish'd such a Power, as that of *Sacerdotal Absolution, in his Church?* [*Whosoever Sins ye Remit, they are Remitted*] Your Lordship, whose Office it is to conferr this Power on Priests, may not deny it. Is not this Power necessary to be exercis'd for the *Remission of the Sins, even of the Penitent?* If 'tis not; Then what signifies the Power? nothing at all; because the *Impenitent* certainly *cannot be absolv'd*: What then does Your Lordship mean by complaining so *emphatically*, that this Power

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is asserted to be necessary for the Remission of the Sins, even of the Penitent? Can the Sins of those, who are not Penitent, be Remitted by the Priest, my Lord? This [even of the Penitent] is an amazing Emphasis; since *none but Penitents* can have the Benefit of *Sacerdotal Absolution.*

§. XIII. As to the *Necessity* of this Power, Who shall be Judge that 'tis not Necessary, now Christ has set it up? Would he have Instituted it, if it had not been *Necessary*? Would he have Vested Men with it, if it had not been for the *Spiritual Benefit* of his Members? Will he take it well at our hands, if we neglect and despise what he thought necessary to appoint for our Advantage? How often we shall partake of this Benefit, he has not expressly limited; any more than he has, how frequently we shall receive Sacramental Remission; but because he has not done so, must we therefore wholly neglect and refuse it? His Institution of it, is sufficient to recommend to us, the frequent Reception of it; and if we are so *unwise* as not to seek for it, it lies in the Power of the Church to oblige us to it; and the more she does so, the surer we may be of the Truth and Sincerity of our *Repentance*, and of our consequent Acceptance and Reconciliation with God: For then Men would not be such partial Judges, in favour of themselves, and esteem their Repentance to be true and genuine, when, in reality, it is not so; as they would find by
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Experience (multitudes of them) if the Estate and Condition of their Souls were impartially *Examin'd* into by wise and prudent Messengers of Jesus Christ, who would find them unqualified for God's Pardon of their Sins, and would therefore justly refuse them his Absolution, till they should perform the Duties which are absolutely necessary to an impartial and true Repentance.

§. XIV. The want of having our State more frequently try'd by such Spiritual Judges as these, whom our Lord Jesus Christ has set over us, is undoubtedly one great Cause of that Universal Presumption in God's Mercy, though we Live in Impenitency, which now too much prevails in the World, while every poor Wretch how Ignorant and Wicked soever, is left to his own *unguided* Judgment, to pass Sentence for himself concerning his particular Reconciliation with God, whose Justice is Infinite as well as his Mercy. Considering the great Multitudes of such Sinners, their Natural Partiality, their Hurry and Eagerness in Worldly Affairs, their Unattentiveness to Spiritual Concerns, and their usual Unskilfulness in them, Is it not highly Expedient and Necessary that *Sacerdotal Absolution* should be an *ordinary Means* of preserving Men from falling headlong down those dangerous Precipices, on which they so heedlessly stand? Was it not the Mercy of our Dear Redeemer that set up this
Power

of Priestly Absolution.

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Power in his Church, for such an Excellent purpose; and shall we despise, or shall we disregard this Mercy? Is not his Wisdom infinitely above ours? Why then, do we not submit our Understanding to his so Beneficial an Institution?

§. XV. Your Lordship represents the Teachers of this Doctrine, as agreeing with the Church of Rome, for saying, "*That the Penitent, according to the Christian Covenant cannot expect Remission, without this Sacerdotal Absolution, as a Condition ordinarily Necessary; That Repentance and Conversion cannot blot out Sins without it.*" Upon this, My Lord, I humbly crave leave to enquire, Is Sacerdotal Absolution an Instituted means of Remission, or no? If 'tis not, then it signifies nothing to make any distinction, whether it be *ordinarily Necessary*, or, *extraordinarily Necessary*; for, in such Case it is not any Necessary Condition at all; and so our Saviour's giving this Power to his Church, amounts to nothing; because there is no Duty owing to such a Power, and no Necessity for the Exercise of it. But this I am confident Your Lordship will not agree to, and I have reason for this Confidence; because I find Your Lordship afterwards acknowledging, in effect, that there is such a Power lodg'd in the Church: If our Saviour then gave such a Power, he by so giving made it an

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Instituted Means of Remission; for it cannot be reasonably imagin'd, that he vested Men with such a Power, and at the same time had no design that the Members of his Church, should owe any Duty thereto, but look upon it as a *needless Authority*, to which no Submission was due; this cannot be justly believ'd concerning the *Infinite Wisdom*, of the Supreme Legislator of the Church. And therefore his Establishing such a Power, is a good Proof that 'tis our Duty to have recourse to it, as to one of his *Instituted Means* of our Pardon and Reconciliation: And if we must use it as a *Means*, then 'tis one of the *Conditions Necessary* to our Remission, because *Instituted Means* cannot be despis'd or neglected without incurring the danger of that Penalty of Punishment which is due, for the Sin of Contempt or Neglect of the Divine Authority, which appointed such Means. Sacerdotal Absolution being then a Means and Condition Necessary to Remission; and to the Remission of the *Penitent too*, because the *Impenitent* must not be Absolv'd; by what Rule shall we Discover, that it is a *Condition* not *Ordinarily* but *Extraordinarily Necessary*? Has Christ, the Giver of this Power, and Institutor of this Means, made such a Rule? If he has, where is it? 'Till that is discover'd, Is it not safest for us to take the Sacerdotal Absolution to be a Means, and therefore a Condition *Ordinarily*

of Priestly Absolution.

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dinarily Necessary to our Remission? Especially considering, as I have before observ'd, the great Danger of the Sin of Presumption which the Generality of Men are too much liable to, by being left to Judge for themselves in so weighty a matter, as that of their Reconciliation to God must needs be acknowledg'd to be.

§. XVI. What sort of Penitent is that who expects Remission, when he wilfully rejects, or knowingly neglects Sacerdotal Absolution when he may have it? Is he a *true Penitent* who thus despises an Institution of Jesus Christ? Strange Repentance! this, to be so much as once suppos'd. When we say, that Divine Institutions are *Conditions ordinarily Necessary* to our Salvation, do we thence infer that *Repentance and Conversion cannot blot out Sins without them?* or do we mean thereby, that when those Institutions can be had, and we wilfully and knowingly despise or omit them, then the rest of our Performances which some are pleas'd to call *Repentance and Conversion*, (but upon what Foundation I know not) are not sufficient to blot out our Sins; and the reason is plain; because, we Live in a known wilful Sin, which is not yet Repented of, and therefore our pretended *Repentance and Conversion* are false and spurious: As is Evident in the Wilful known Sins of despising or neglecting the Sacraments of Baptism, and

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the Lord's Supper; and is as applicable to the reigning Sin of despising or neglecting Sacerdotal Absolution, tho' 'tis now become so very fashionable among us.

§. XVII. Your Lordship asks, "*Where does our Church teach or require it in any of her Offices?*" [viz. Sacerdotal Absolution, as a Condition *ordinarily Necessary*, to the Remission of Penitents, if I mistake not, the Coherence of the Words, and Your Lordships after-Discourse upon her Three Forms of Absolution] To which I humbly presume to Answer, That she teaches it, by requiring it to be duly attended to by her Members, *every Day, Morning and Evening, in her Offices for Morning and Evening Prayer Daily throughout the Year*; And, in her Office for the Holy Communion, frequently to be Administred, and more frequently too by her Rules, than is *generally practis'd*: In both which Offices, the Priest is order'd to stand up [to express his Authority] and *Pronounce the Absolution or Remission of Sins*, while the People are to remain Kneeling, in the humble Posture of Penitents, to receive this Absolution; this is requir'd by the Church, and thus frequently too; and what can we understand by this Her Injunction, so often to be submitted to, but that She thereby Teaches us the great Necessity of Sacerdotal Absolution as an *Ordinary Means* of Remission?

§. XVIII.

§. XVIII. But Your Lordship is pleas'd to say, That the Absolution, in the Daily Service, "is a general Declaratory Absolution pronounc'd by the Priest;" and, that the Absolution, in the Communion Service, is, "A Precatory One, p. 11. The First, shewing, That God do's Pardon and Absolve all that sincerely Repent and Believe: *He, i. e. God, Pardoneth and Absolveth, &c.* The Second Precatory, That God would have Mercy upon all so qualified in the Congregation: *Almighty God have Mercy upon you, Pardon and Deliver you, &c.* pag. 12."

To this I humbly beg leave to Answer, that Your Lordship does not venture to say, That the First Absolution is *only Declaratory*; but that it is a *Declaratory One*, without restraining it, *only "to shewing, that God do's Pardon:"* So again, Your Lordship avoids saying, That the other Absolution is *only Precatory*; that it *only Prays*, "That God would have Mercy, &c."

No; Your Lordship says, That it is Precatory, without limiting it to be only a Prayer. All this, my Lord, leaves room for us to believe, that the One of these Absolutions is more than Declaratory, tho' it be Declaratory; and that the other is more than Precatory, tho' it be allow'd to be a Prayer. And this we learn from the Church's Offices themselves.

§. XIX. For First, As to the Absolution, in the Daily Service, it is expressly call'd by her, "*The Absolution or Remission of Sins.*" She does not call it a Declaration of, or concerning, Absolution; which certainly, she would have done, if she had taken it to be no more: But she positively, and very emphatically, calls it, "**The Absolution, &c.**" And why she should call it so, if it were not really the Absolution or Forgiveness of Sins, to properly qualify'd Persons, is inconceivable. Again, She commands it to be *pronounced by the Priest alone*: The word Pronounc'd, is of a *Latin* Derivation, and signifies much more than barely to declare a Thing; for the *Latin*, from whence 'tis taken, (*Pronunciare*) signifies also to *judge or give Sentence*; and is very aptly us'd here, where the Sentence of Absolution, or Remission of Sins, is to be Authoritatively utter'd, by one who bears God's Commission, for so Sacred a Judicial Act: 'Tis to be pronounc'd by the **Priest alone**, this excludes others, who are not Priests, from pronouncing it; and the Reason why it excludes them, is, First, Because the Rubrick is express and positive, that the *Priest alone* shall do it: And, Secondly, Because, in the following Preface, before he pronounces the Pardon, he Vouches, and is oblig'd to Vouch, his Commission receiv'd from God, to *pronounce it*; which is a great Inconsistence for any Man

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of Priestly Absolution.

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to do, who was never vested with that Commission; and therefore, even *Deacons*, are hereby excluded from pronouncing this Absolution: For, in their Ordination, they are not impowered to *remit Sins*, as Priests are, in this Form, "*Whose Sins thou dost remit, they are remitted;*" and, if Deacons, then certainly all Lay-men too, of what Dignity soever, are *totally* excluded, by this Rubrick, from pronouncing the Absolution. But why should the Church thus exclude all but Priests from this Power, if it consists *only* in *declaring*, or telling the good News of Pardon and Remission? Is not a Deacon impower'd to Preach? Yes, he is; Why then may not he publish or declare the glad Tidings, if that be all the Import of the Absolution? But the Church limiting the Pronouncing thereof to the *Priest alone*, and thereby excluding the Deacon, is a full Proof, that the Pronouncing of Absolution is more than *Preaching*, more than *Declaring* and *Publishing* it; 'tis therefore *Judicial*, because to be done only by one who is vested with a *Judicial Power* of Absolving and Remitting Sins, *i. e.* the Priest.

§. XX. The Preface confirms this; for he, who pronounces the Absolution, cites, and is bound to cite, his Commission in these Words, "*Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he*"
"may

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“ *may turn from his Wickedness and Live, and*
 “ **HATH GIVEN POWER, and Com-**
 “ **mandment, TO HIS MINISTERS,** *to*
 “ *declare, and pronounce, to his People being*
 “ *being Penitent, the Absolution and*
 “ **Remission of their Sins:**” Wherein the
 word *Power*, signifies *Authority* and *Com-*
mission, given by God, to his Ministers;
 and the word *Commandment*, that Obligation,
 which he has laid on them, to put in Exe-
 cution *this Commission*: The Persons Com-
 mission’d, are here call’d *his Ministers*, i. e.
God’s Ministers, to express the Greatness of
 their Authority and Function, that they are
 of a much more exalted Nature than that of
Ministers of the Church; That they stand in
 God’s stead, and represent him, as the Au-
 thoriz’d *Ministers* of Earthly Potentates,
 stand in stead of, and represent their So-
 veraign, so far as they are Commission’d to
 Act for him; The Matter of their Com-
 mission, i. e. the Commission given to God’s
 Ministers, is affirm’d to be [not only] *to*
declare [but more] *and pronounce*, i. e. *Give*
Sentence of Absolution and Remission of Sins:
 So that the Priest, being one of God’s Mi-
 nisters, makes publick Proclamation, that he
 has Power and Commandment from God,
 not only to tell them the News of Pardon,
 (for this every one that has heard it can do;
 and the People know that News, it may be,
 as well as himself) but also, that he is come
 from God, with sufficient Power, to pass Sen-
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tence of Pardon; to give Absolution and Remission of Sins; or, which is the same thing, to bring God's Pardon, and effectually to apply it to Sinners, so as that they shall, by Virtue therof, be actually pardon'd; which none can do, but one who is so Authoriz'd by God.

§.XXI. Lastly, The Persons to whom this Absolution must be pronounc'd, is another convincing Proof, that 'tis more than merely Declarative; for the general Commission to *Preach to all Nations*, Impenitent and Penitent, such as are out of the Church, and such as are in it, is not here referr'd to; neither does the Priest produce or name that General Commission, which Authorizes him to inform and reclaim the Impenitent Members, even of the Church it self: But the Commission or Power which he Vouches, is only that which is for the Benefit of *God's People being Penitent*, i. e. those faithful Members of the Church, who are *already Penitent*; this Commission relates only to them, and cannot be executed, but where they are present: A Commission only to publish the glad Tidings of Pardon, may be executed even in the Presence, and in Behalf of the Stubborn and Rebellious Infidels themselves, to encourage them to repent and turn to God, that they may be pardon'd: But a Commission to pronounce or give Sentence of Pardon to *God's People being Penitent*, is of so limited a Nature,

ture, that it can be *executed* upon them only; none else can receive the *immediate* or *present* Benefit thereof: For Infidels, and Impenitent Sinners, are not the Subjects of this Commission; the Priest is not here said to have any *Power* or *Commandment* relating to them; they are quite left out and neglected, as Persons not fit or proper to have this Commission executed in their Behalf; which certainly they would not have been, if the Commission to Absolve, amounted to no more, than telling the News of Absolution to be obtain'd; 'tis fit that even the Impenitent should be told this News, That God will Pardon them, if they will repent and turn to him: This would be a great Inducement to forward their Conversion. But the Church taking no notice of them in this Commission of Absolution, plainly shews, That the Absolution, here to be pronounc'd, is more than declaring the News of so great a Benefit; because 'tis to pronounce "*to his People being Penitent*" ('tis not a Power and Command to pronounce, before they are Penitent) *the Absolution and Remission of their Sins*:" No, they must be *Penitent* before, or, at least, at the very time of pronouncing the Absolution; otherwise they are not the proper Subjects thereof; and therefore, this Absolution, is more than Declarative, 'tis Effective and Judicial, insuring and conveying, to the proper Subjects thereof, the very Absolution or Remission it self: 'Tis as much
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a bringing of God's Pardon to the Penitent Member of Christ's Church, and as effectual to his present Benefit, as an authoriz'd Messenger's bringing a Pardon from his Sovereign, to a condemn'd Penitent Criminal, is effectual to his present Pardon and Release, from the before-appointed Punishment, &c.

§. XXII. And this is confirm'd by the Words themselves, of the Absolution, which the Priest, in pursuance of God's Authority and Commandment given to him, pronounces, and they are these; "*He [i.e. God] pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his Holy Gospel.*" Now the Priest, in pronouncing this Absolution, either is *God's Minister*, and as such, brings and applies, to the Penitent Believer, *God's Pardon*, or he does not; if he does, then the Penitent Believer, upon the Priest's pronouncing the Absolution, is *actually pardon'd*: He receives God's Pardon, convey'd to him by the Priest, *God's Minister*, empower'd for that purpose; which is the thing pleaded for, and is more than the meer telling of News, that Pardon is to be had; for the Absolution does not say, God will Pardon you; or, God has promis'd to Pardon you, if you repent, &c. or, God has already pardon'd: But it says, "*He pardoneth and absolveth,*" in the Present Tense, to shew that the Pardon is neither past, nor to come, but is now actually given; and, the Power

or Commission, and Commandment, before cited by the Priest, shews who it is that is the Bearer or Conveyer of this present actual Pardon, viz. God's Minister, the Priest, who pronounces the Sentence in God's stead. But, if it be affirm'd that the Priest do's not bring and apply to the Penitent Believer God's Pardon, when he pronounces the Absolution; then it must follow, upon the Truth of that Assertion, that God do's not, at that present time, *Pardon and Absolve him*; which is directly contrary to the very Letter of the Words [*He pardoneth and absolveth*] and so the Church is made to lay an Injunction upon the Priest to pronounce a Lye every time he reads the Absolution.

§. XXIII. If it be said, that Penitents are pardon'd by God himself, and that therefore there is no need of the Priest to pronounce or give the Sentence of this Pardon; 'tis answer'd, That the Premisses are true, and the Consequence false: God himself, is most certainly the Sovereign, who Pardons; but he has appointed the Priest to be the Bearer and Giver of his Pardon, in his stead; for the Church affirms, That this Sovereign has empower'd and commanded, *His Ministers*, the Priests, to pronounce this Pardon; and this she affirms, because warranted to do so by *Her Great and Infallible Rule*, the Holy Scripture; and therefore, these Objectors reflect undutifully upon the Wisdom
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of our Church, as if she impos'd a needless Injunction, by requiring the Priests daily to pronounce this Pardon; and the People humbly and devoutly to receive it from their Mouth: Such Opposers as these, do also contradict the Church, by reckoning that God has given no such Power and Commandment to his Ministers, when the Church positively affirms that he has; and herein they very proudly give her the Lye: Or, if some of them do agree with her that God has so empower'd and commanded his Ministers, yet they very dangerously, and, I may say, blasphemously, arraign his Infinite Wisdom, while they suppose him to have given such Power and Command, with respect to Penitent Believers; and, at the same time, esteem that Power and Commandment unnecessary, to be put in Execution; and, that it is needless for *Penitents* to pay any Duty or Respect to such a delegated Power, tho' 'twas given by God himself, only for the Sake and Benefit of the truly Penitent: What is this, but to say, that God gives unnecessary Powers to Men; and, what else is this, but to advance our Foolishness above his Infinite Wisdom and Knowledge? But let us not deceive our selves; for "*the Wisdom of this World is Foolishness with God*, 1 Cor. iii. 19. And "*the Foolishness of God* [i. e. what some Men esteem to be foolish in his Appointments] *is wiser than Men*, 1 Cor. i. 25." If God has (as the Church says he has)

has) given **Power** and **Commandment** to his Ministers, not only to declare, but also, and to pronounce to his People being Penitent, the Absolution and Remission of their Sins, i.e. to give them the Sentence of Pardon and Forgiveness; let not Men be so bold as to say, That Penitents have no need of the Priest's Absolution, when God's appointing them to give it to the Penitent, is a sure Token that the Penitent stand in need of it; and when the Church requires them to receive it accordingly, every Day, Morning and Evening, at the Mouth of the Priest, and of the Priest alone, thereby teaching us, that it is *ordinarily* Necessary for the Penitent; insomuch, that tho' they receiv'd it in the Morning, they must receive it again in the Evening too, and this daily throughout the Year, every time they can give their Attendance at Divine Service.

§. XXIV. How Men can be accounted to be true Penitents, who wilfully neglect or refuse to receive God's Pardon from the Mouth of those, His Ministers, whom he has authoriz'd to be the Pronouncers of that Remission which he grants to Penitents; is as hard to imagine, as it is to understand, how that Subject, who has been in Rebellion against his Sovereign, can be said to have return'd to his Allegiance and Submission to his Prince, while he wilfully spurns at, and despises his Sovereign's Pardon, sent to him by One of his

his chief Ministers of State, whom he has empower'd, to treat with such repentant Rebels, in his stead, because his offended Majesty will have no direct and immediate Interview with 'em, but refers 'em to such as he has authoriz'd to stand, in his stead, for the carrying on of such Treaties of Reconciliation; which is the very Case between us and the Deity, between whom, since Man's Apostacy, there is no Intercourse to be granted, but by Means of the One Great Mediator Christ Jesus, and such as are by him empower'd to Act in his stead, here on Earth, during his Personal Absence — But enough of this.

§. XXV. I come now to the Absolution, in the Communion Service, which Your Lordship says, is *Precatory*; and others say more, that it is *only Precatory*. Against these Latter I humbly move, that it may be consider'd, That the Church expressly calls it, "*This Absolution*." Either 'tis true, that 'tis an Absolution, or 'tis not; if it is not an Absolution, or Forgiveness of Sin, Then how shall we account for the Church's calling it so, when it is not? Does the Church give false Names to Things? This is not to be allow'd; therefore it is, as she calls it, "*Absolution*," i. e. an actual *Forgiveness of Sin*; and to be pronounc'd by the Priest, or Bishop, being present Persons who have Commission to *remit Sins*: The Church does
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The Nature and Necessity

not say, in her Rubrick, that the Priest, or Bishop, shall say this **Prayer for Pardon**; no, she Commands, that he shall pronounce "*This Absolution*;" which certainly implies much more than barely praying for Pardon, except Men will say, that every Prayer for Pardon, is an Absolution or Remission of Sin; which will be a very bold and unwarrantable Assertion, and what they will never be able to prove: This then is an actual Absolution, or Forgiveness of Sins, pronounc'd by the Priest; and 'tis utter'd by him, not so much in the way of Prayer, as of a *Benediction*, or *Blessing*: For, it is not an Address to God in the Second Person, which is the usual way of Praying; but it is a Blessing from God, dispens'd by One who is sent by him to Bless in his Name, "*Almighty God, &c.*" "*Pardon and deliver you* [i. e. you that truly repent] *from all your Sins.* It is spoken in the Third Person, the usual way of giving a Blessing, and is expressly call'd by the Church "*Absolution*," i. e. The Pardon and Remission of Sins, which it would not be, if it did not really bring the Pardon; which Absolution certainly does, whensoever pronounc'd over duly qualify'd Persons, by One who has this Commission, "*Whose Sins thou dost remit, they are remitted.*" Let the Form of Words be what they will, if they are to be pronounc'd in pursuance of that Commission, they are an Absolution, and do actually release from Sin; because this is the

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Concomitant that always attend such a Form; "they are remitted." This is the Divine Concurrence with the Priest's Words, when they are appointed by the Church to be an *Absolution*; for the Promise of God never fails, it is Indicative, and always Present, "they are remitted," if we may believe God himself. And therefore this Form being pronounc'd by such a Commission'd Minister of God, and in pursuance of his Commission, to Absolve; because the Church appoints it to be an *Absolution*, effects the Thing for which the Commission was given, and consequently, by Means of the Priest's pronouncing thereof the Sins of the Penitent, "are remitted, pardon'd, and done away; which shews, that this Form amounts to more than an ordinary Prayer for Pardon. But of this, God willing, I design to treat something more largely, in a Second Edition of *Sacerdotal Powers*.

§. XXVI. I am now to consider what Your Lordship says, concerning the Church's other Form of *Absolution*, in Her Office, for the Visitation of the Sick. This Absolution Your Lordship acknowledges, to be "Particular and Judicial; p: 11, and 12. and offers at no Arguments against the Validity thereof; and therefore I take it for granted, that Your Lordship owns such a Power in the Church, as that the Priest can Judicially Absolve Penitent Sinners; or, which is the same thing, pass an Effective

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Sentence of Pardon and Forgiveness, by "*Christ's Authority committed to Him*." This confirms what I have observ'd before, that the Power of Absolution given to God's Ministers is a *Judicial Power*; and that when they Pronounce Absolution, 'tis in Pursuance and by virtue of this Judicial Power committed to them, and is therefore a Judicial Act; the Act of an Authoriz'd Judge, whereby the Penitent Sinner is freed from the Penalty of Punishment due to Sin: which is the plain honest Meaning of Absolution, in the Spiritual Sense of the Word: And proves that the Two preceeding Forms being by the Church affirm'd to be *Absolutions*, are Judicial Acts, because Pronounced by one vested with a Judicial Power of Absolving, and in Pursuance of that Power, *viz.* that Sinners may be actually Absolv'd.

§. XXVII. But upon this last Form, Your Lordship Remarks, tho' 'tis acknowledg'd to be *Judicial*; yet that "*'Tis to be Pronounced only in special Cases, and upon special Conditions? If the Sick Person feel his Conscience troubled with some weighty Matter; If he make a special Confession of his Sins; and if he humbly and heartily desire Absolution*." All this is certainly true, my Lord, because no Man can be qualified for so great a Benefit, who is not sensible of the heavy Load of Sin; which is in all Cases a very weighty Matter. But
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here, my Lord, lies the Question, Whether Men ought not frequently to be sensible of the heavy Burden of those Sins they have Committed, and often Relaps'd into? Especially, whether they ought not to be so upon a Sick Bed? The Church has a Rubrick, which will help us to an Answer to this Important Question; and 'tis this in the same Office for the Visitation of the Sick, after the Minister has Examined the Sick Man's Faith, he is commanded to inquire also into the Sinful Part of his Life and Conversation; For the Church's Words are these, "*Then shall the Minister Examine whether he Repent him truly of his Sins,* &c. This is an exprefs Command of the Church; and how it must be fulfill'd, is to be inquir'd. In order thereto, I beg leave to ask, Whether a general Question to the Sick, asking him, "*dost thou Repent thee truly of thy Sins?*" is a fulfilling the Church's Command? Does an Examination amount to no more than this; will the single Answer of the Sick, "*Yes I do,*" satisfy the pious Design of the Church in this Rubrick? Who is there that can safely venture to say it? When a Man, for Example, is a Candidate for Holy Orders, and is to be Examined, whether he has a Right Knowledge of Theology; will the single Question, Are you truly Skill'd in Divinity? and his bare Answer, Yes, I am; pass for an Examination? no such matter: Examination is such an

Inquiry as searches into Particulars, and is not content with Generals; because they are not sufficient to Answer the Design of an Examination, which is to know the *Truth* or *Falshood* of the Matter, about which the Examination is made.

§. XXVIII. And therefore the Church by commanding the Priest to *Examine*, *whether* the Sick Repent him *Truly* of his Sins, requires the Priest to search narrowly into his Conscience, that the *Truth* or *Falshood* of his Repentance may appear, in order to his Spiritual Advantage, under this Afflicting Dispensation of Providence: He is to *Examine*, *whether* he Repent *truly*, or *falsly*, otherwise the Church would not put in the Word [*whether*] which has a reference to more than One thing to be inquir'd into: And how the Priest should do this without Sifting his Conscience about particular Sins, and searching into what Sense he has of them, is impossible to conceive; as it is also, how the Sick should make Satisfactory Answers to the Priest's Examination of his Repentance, if he do's not Confess, or Acknowledge to the Priest those very Sins he has been Guilty of, and thereby express the Truth of his Repentance, concerning which, the Priest is, by the Church's Command, making strict Inquiry. If this requir'd Discipline were duly observ'd, by the Priest and the Sick, there's hardly a Sick Christian but
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would feel his Conscience troubled with the weight of Sin; would make a special Confession of his Sins to the Priest; and would humbly and heartily Desire the following Absolution, as many of the best Lights of our Church have piously done upon their Sick Beds: And God grant that their Equals and Inferiours may all follow their pious Examples.

§. XXIX. Then there would be no occasion for Your Lordship's Observation: That If the Sick, "*Does not feel his Conscience troubled with some weighty matter; or if he will not make a special Confession of his Sins to the Priest, thinking it enough to transact that matter between God and his own Soul; or, after all, if he will not humbly and heartily Desire that Absolution; there is no Order or Direction for the Priest to give it him.*" For if that First Rubrick were put in Execution and Submitted to, as certainly it ought to be; the Sick would not find himself at Liberty to say — without being guilty of Disobedience; "*I will not make a special Confession of my Sins to the Priest.*" He would not "*think it enough to transact that matter between God and his own Soul.*" He would be very well convinc'd of the contrary; and of the great Danger of trusting to the blind Guide of his own weak Judgment, in so weighty a matter, as this is at his Launching out into
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an unchangeable Eternity; and he would, by a prudent and knowing Guide of Souls, be so well inform'd of his Duty, of Reverence and Respect, to every thing that bears the Divine Name, that is Stamp'd with His Sacred Character, that Represents Him by being Vested with His Authority to Transact Spiritual Matters between God and Man; that he would dread the Sin of "not humbly and heartily Desiring that Sacerdotal Absolution;" which God has Promis'd to concur with, ratify and confirm, when duly Pronounc'd by those whom he has Impower'd in his Name to Absolve Repentant Sinners, and to retain the Sins of the Impenitent and Disobedient, Saying, *Whosoever Sins ye Remit they are Remitted unto them; and whosoever Sins ye Retain, they are Retained.*

The Invalidity of Baptism Administer'd by Persons, who have received no Commission to Baptize.

§.XXX. In p.13. Your Lordship takes notice of another Notion, which Your Lordship is pleas'd to say, "*begins to prevail too much; and that is, The Invalidity and Nullity of Baptism, administered by Persons not Episcopally ordain'd.*" A Doctrine (says Your Lordship) that do's at once Unchristian all the Reform'd Churches abroad, even those Blessed Martyrs among them, who have been Baptiz'd in their own Blood, laid down their Lives for the Gospel, and glorified God by their Deaths, &c." And, in pag. 15. "*How many Thousands of our own Church, must*

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this Doctrine Unchristian, from the Reformation, &c.

All this, my Lord, has been abundantly answer'd, in Three Books, publish'd at several times, viz. *Lay-Baptism Invalid*; First, Second, and Third Edition; *Sacerdotal Powers*; and, *Dissenters Baptism Null and Void*. For which reason, there is no need here to enlarge in answer to this Objection: Only, my Lord, 'tis humbly propos'd, that the Way to prove *my Doctrine false*, is not to begin with the inconvenient or dangerous Consequences thereof, which Men, fallible Men! have involv'd themselves into; and, from thence (because such Consequences are *dreadful*) therefore conclude, that the Doctrine is false; for, at this rate, no Doctrine of Christianity will stand secure: To Instance only, in One of the Fundamentals of our Holy Religion, the Deity of the Second and Third Persons of the Glorious Trinity; The Denial of this Doctrine, is Heresy: St. Paul says, *He, that is guilty of Heresy, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, Gal. v. 20, 21. Here, my Lord, vast Multitudes have been concern'd in the Consequence of asserting, The Godhead of the Son and Holy Ghost; for all, who oppos'd this Doctrine, were involv'd in the Guilt of Heresy, and consequently were liable to that dreadful Threat of the inspir'd Apostle: And who were these, but a great Number of Churches, and their Bishops, in several Parts of the Roman Empire. At the rate of arguing

ing in these Days, the Doctrine of the Deity of the Son of God, and of the Holy Ghost, must have been pronounc'd *false, dangerous, and uncharitable*, if the mischievous Consequences, which Men run themselves into, could have made that Doctrine so: The Catholicks, in those Days, did not thus judge of Doctrines; the Consequence is Dreadful, *ergo*, the Doctrine is False: No, they enter'd into the Merits of the Cause, and did not regard the Consequences, any other ways, than by endeavouring, with Prayers and Tears, Instruction and Discipline, to rescue Men out of, and preserve them from 'em. For Truth cannot change its Nature, and vary it self, to be accommodate to every Circumstance of Man's Will and Pleasure; every Man is bound to take care not to make bad Consequences by his own Wilfulness or Carelesness; but, if Men will be *perverse or negligent*, Truth must remain still the same; and the Mischief of the Consequences, which Men make, they may thank themselves for. How God will deal with some, who are unwillingly involv'd in them, is nothing to us, we must leave that to his infinite Wisdom and Goodness; still looking to our selves, that we do not make our selves guilty of such dangerous Consequences, by acting contrary to his Will; nor contribute by our *over Easiness*, and but *imaginary Charities*, to their false Notions, and unwarrantable Practices, which are *confessedly very dangerous ones*, if the

the Doctrine be true, which they in *Principle* and *Practice* do oppose: This shews the Necessity of entering upon the Merits of the Cause; of sifting the Doctrine it self; of judging it by the Great Rule and Standard of necessary Truths, the Holy Scripture; and, of determining its being True or False, by that only Touch-Stone, let the Consequences be what they will, and the Number of Men never so great, who are concern'd in them.

§. XXXI. As for those among the Reform'd, whom Your Lordship mentions to have been "*Baptiz'd in their own Blood,*" God himself knows the Greatness of their Endeavours, and the Sincerity of their Desires, to have all things set to rights in the Church; We know not, but in Consideration of these Things, and of their Zeal for some great Truths, he may have accepted, and, we hope, he has accepted of them, as the Primitive Christians believ'd he did of unbaptiz'd *Catechumens*, who were, as Your Lordship expresses it, Baptiz'd in their own Blood——But this, my Lord, is no reason for us to believe, that their Water Baptism, is the Baptism instituted by Christ, while it is destitute of an essential Part of that Institution, *viz.* The Divine Authority of him who is to minister it; which has been endeavour'd to be prov'd, as much instituted, and as obliging, and necessary, as Water it self: And against

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which, the Opposers have yet produc'd no Argument in Publick; nor Your Lordship neither, in this Your Charge to Your Clergy.

§. XXXII. Your Lordship makes a very remarkable Note upon the Letter of the University of Oxford, which they sent not many Years since to Geneva. I shall (without concerning my self with the Letter) transcribe that Note, as it stands in pag. 14. and 'tis this; "**Necessity cannot make their Sacraments Valid, if an Essential of a Sacrament be wanting. Necessity may excuse an Irregularity, or the Absence of something relating, to the bene Esse, of a Sacrament; but not to the Esse of it. If the Administrator be of the Esse of the Sacrament of Baptism, Necessity can no more make that Baptism, where there is not a proper Administrator, Valid; than it can that, where either the Matter, or the Form, the Water, or the Words, are not used.**—

And, in the next Note upon the same Letter, Your Lordship says, "**Either those Churches have lawful Pastors, and Sacraments duly administred, or they have them not; if they have them not, they are destitute of them, altogether destitute: But, if they have them, they are not destitute of them at all. There is no magis and minus in the Validity, or Invalidity of Sacraments, which cannot be partly Valid, and partly Invalid.**

"*valid.*" Account of Dr. Grabe, and his
 "MSS. pag. 29." Thus far Your Lordship's
 Notes upon that Letter. From all which,
 thus much is justly to be inferr'd, that
 Your Lordship does not care for the Con-
 sequences of the *Genevans* being without
 "*lawful Pastors, and Sacraments,*" if they
 are indeed without them: Your Lordship
 will not allow, that even *Necessity* it self
 can be a sufficient Foundation whereon to
 build the Validity of those pretended Sacra-
 ments, which want an *Essential* of a Sacra-
 ment; *Necessity cannot make them Valid,*
 says Your Lordship: Therefore, in Your
 Lordship's declar'd Opinion, the *Plea of*
Necessity, so often insisted on, is nothing to
 the purpose, when *Essentials* are concern'd.
 This, I hope, some, who have talk'd so
 much of *Necessity* of late, will take notice
 of, now 'tis so well recommended by Your
 Lordship's just Observation upon the Matter;
 and then, there will remain nothing but to
 enquire, First, Whether a Commission from
 Jesus Christ, is *Essential* to the Administration
 of Valid Sacraments? And, Secondly, Whe-
 ther *this Commission* is convey'd from Christ,
 the Sovereign Giver of it, by *Bishops only*?
 Upon these Two Questions, the whole Dis-
 pute must turn; and whatsoever is foreign
 to these Two, will be found to be utterly
 remote from the purpose, even the *Plea of*
Necessity it self, as Your Lordship very fairly
 observes. The First of these Questions, is the

principal Matter, and main Design of the Book, Intituled, *Lay-Baptism Invalid*; wherein, 'tis endeavour'd to be prov'd in the Affirmative, that the Divine Commission is *Essential to the* Ministration of Christian Baptism. I shall not trouble Your Lordship, nor my Reader, with the Repetition of the Arguments; because Your Lordship advances nothing against them. The Second has been fully prov'd by the best Writers of our Church, to whom the Reader is referr'd; and therefore, I have nothing more to say upon those Two necessary Points at present.

§. XXXIII. Only, upon Your Lordship's Note, I beg leave to remark, That there is a very nice Distinction made between the *Esse* of a Sacrament, and the *bene Esse* of it; the *Being* of a Sacrament, and the *well Being*: I acknowledge, my Lord, that I always thought, when a Sacrament was in *Esse*, 'twas at the same time in *bene Esse*, and this constantly and unalterably; and what induc'd me to think so, was, that I conceiv'd a *real Sacrament*, to be a Thing of an *unchangeable Nature*, as a Sacrament; and, that it had no Degrees of Health or Sicknes, of Efficacy, or Ineffectuality in it. I thought, my Lord, that when People receiv'd no Benefit from it, it was not by reason of any ill *Accident* in the Sacrament it self, but because of some *Obstacle* in the Receiver: Just as the Grace of God is always in *bene Esse*, and nothing

nothing less in *bene Esse* for a Sinner's refusing or neglecting to qualify himself for the Reception of it : Again, my Lord, on the Part of the Ministration, with respect to the commission'd Administrator of a Sacrament, I thought 'twas out of his Power, tho' guilty of Wickedness, to put a Sacrament out of its *bene Esse*, by his ministring it; and, I thought so, because the 26th Article of our Church, as I imagine, teaches me so, by affirming, concerning the Christian Sacraments, that "*neither is the Effect of Christ's Ordinance taken away by their Wickedness,*" — That they "*be Effectual because of Christ's Institution and Promise, altho' they be ministred by evil Men.*" So that, my Lord, I have hitherto been unable to discover what sort of a Thing that is, which is suppos'd to have the *Esse*, but not the *bene Esse* of a Sacrament : I cannot see that the Unworthiness of the Receiver, puts the Sacrament out of its *bene Esse*, any more than it does out of its *Esse*; just as I cannot understand, how a barren Piece of Ground, puts the Rays of the Sun, and the Showers of Heaven, out of their *bene Esse* : They are, I think, in the same State of *Being* still, and their Influence equally Powerful in it self as of Rays and Showers; but the Ground is not in *bene Esse* for those Influences — So the Unworthy Receiver of a Sacrament, I doubt not, is out of his *bene Esse*; and I know of no other Reason for his not receiving

ceiving the Benefits of that Sacrament, which, by the Divine Institution, is *always efficacious* as a Sacrament; but his own Wickedness, which cannot be said to make the Sacrament it self in a worse State and Condition as a Sacrament, than it us'd to be; for if it cou'd, then others, who receive the same Sacrament at that time, would receive a *less perfect* Sacrament than they would, if he were Absent: But this I cannot understand; because I know of no *majus* and *minus*, in the Perfection or Efficacy of a Sacrament, as a Sacrament: And therefore, can see no reason, why the *Esse*, and *bene Esse* of a Sacrament, should not signifie the same Thing; or rather, why we should talk at all of the *bene Esse* of a Sacrament, when the *Esse* of a Sacrament is enough for all the Purposes of a Sacrament, and while it is in *Esse*, cannot but be in *bene Esse*; or, to speak in plain *English*, while it is a Sacrament, having all the Essentials relating thereto, 'tis a Thing so very good, that it cannot be mended: And if so, then 'tis in its *well Being*, when it is in *Being*; that is, when it is a real Sacrament, with all the Essentials belonging to it; for, without these, it is not in *Being* at all.—

§. XXXIV. The Motive which induces some to *aim* at this Distinction, appears to be this; That they plainly enough Discover, that the Institution of Baptism requires, that he who Ministers that Sacrament, should have the
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Divine Commission; and that therefore this Commission, in some respect or other, has a Relation to the Sacrament; this they are willing to allow, because otherwise it would render the Commission to be of no Consequence; and for this Reason they would have it, that the Commission belongs to the *bene Esse* (as they call it) of the Sacrament. But then they do not like, that the Commission should be esteem'd to have a Relation to the very *Esse* of the Sacrament; because, if it has, then, where the Commission is absent, there is no Sacrament at all: this they know would infer, that many among our selves, as well as others Abroad, are destitute of Christian Sacraments; to salve whose Case, they reckon this suppos'd Distinction to be of great Use: But to obviate this imaginary Distinction, it has, I humbly hope, been prov'd, that the Commission of the Minister, is an Essential Part of the Institution of Baptism; that the Commission is of equal Obligation, as Binding and Necessary to us, as the very Water and the Form of Baptism; and that there is the same Reason for the Nullity of a Baptism, which is without this Commission only; as there is for the Nullity of a Baptism, which wants either Water, or the Form only; for which see the 1st. 2d. and 3d. Propositions of *Lay-Baptism Invalid*: By all which, 'tis Evident that the Commission of the Minister of Baptism, is necessarily related to the

the very *Esse*, the very Being of the Sacrament it self; and the Opposers have not yet done any thing that can overthrow those Three Propositions; and 'till they have disprov'd them, the desir'd Distinction is not to be allow'd of.

§. XXXV. For, to be a little larger upon that matter, if we Examine the Nature of a Sacrament as 'tis defin'd by our Church, 'tis "an outward visible Sign, of an inward Spiritual Grace, given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means, whereby we Receive the same, and a Pledge to assure us thereof. What is there Necessary to the *bene Esse* of such a Sacrament, which is not also as Necessary to it's very *Esse*? To be in *bene Esse*, I hope, it must have every thing, that is requir'd to make it a visible Sign, a Means, and a Pledge of inward Grace; and all these it must equally have to be in *Esse*: For whatsoever wants these, or any of these, is not a Sacrament. It remains then, That the Author or Authors of this Distinction, give us some Instances of a Sacrament's being a more or less perfect outward visible Sign, Means and Pledge, by reason of the presence or absence of what they would suppose to have a Relation to the *bene Esse* of a Sacrament. Your Lordship gives us no such Instance; and 'till one is produc'd, we must believe, that when a Sacrament is in *Esse*, 'tis and must be in *bene Esse*,

Esse, because it cannot be otherwise in Being; consequently when a pretended *Sacrament* is destitute of what is acknowledg'd to belong to the *bene Esse* of a real *Sacrament*, it wants at the same time what belongs to the very *Esse* of a *Sacrament*; and is therefore no *Sacrament* at all: Such an Instance of a *Sacrament* in *Esse* and not in *bene Esse* will amount to this, That it is a Good visible *Sign*, *Means* and *Pledge*, and Good it must be, because 'tis a *Sacrament* in *Esse*; but because 'tis not in *bene Esse*, therefore 'tis not a Good *Sign*, *Means* and *Pledge*, which will be a contradiction, because the *Absence* of Good, is not Good. —

§. XXXVI. These, my Lord, are the Obstacles which hinder me from coming over to the allowance of such a Distinction; and so long as they stand in my way, I must continue to think, that the *bene Esse* of a *Sacrament* is no other than its very *Esse*; and consequently, that if the Commission of the Minister be allow'd to belong to the *bene Esse*, it must also relate to the very *Esse* or Being of the *Sacrament*; and consequently, that where *this Commission* is wanting, there the *Sacrament* is not in *Esse*, and so there is no *Sacrament* without a Divine Commission.

§. XXXVII. What Your Lordship says, concerning the Church of *England's* allowing
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formerly of Lay-Baptism, in Case of Necessity; and King *James* the First's dislike of what Your Lordship calls *Re-baptizing*, p. 15. has been Answer'd already, in the Book Intituled, *Dissenters and other Unauthoriz'd Baptisms, Null and Void, by the Articles, Canons and Rubricks of the Church of England*: To which I add, that let King *James*'s Opinion, as to that matter, be what it will, it makes nothing against Truth, which must not be built upon Private Notions; especially such as are against Fix'd and Establish'd Fundamental Laws; The Church of *England*, in Convocation Assembled, has Abrogated the former allowance of Lay-Baptism in Case of Necessity, by erasing the Rubrick which countenanc'd that allowance; and by confining the Ministration of Baptism in Cases even of Necessity, to the *Lawful Minister*, in her present Law or Rule of Action; the erasing of the Old, and establishing the New Law, is a good Argument in Law, that what is done in pursuance of the antiquated and abrogated Law, is a Nullity, by the New Law, which was made to be constantly now observ'd; for whosoever is now pretendedly Baptiz'd contrary to this New Law, can claim no Right by vertue of any Law whatsoever, to have his suppos'd Baptism admitted for Good and Valid: The Law of God gives it no Validity; if it do's, let that Law be produc'd; the Law of our Church gives it none neither, if

if it do's, where is that Law? by what *rule* then must it be judg'd to be Valid, when there is no Law, whereby to Pronounce it so. Can Validities be judg'd of without Rule or Law to Determine the Judgment? If they can, then, my Lord, I would feign know what part of Your Lordship's Sacred Function will stand secure? At this rate, Two or Three designing Fellows, who never were in Commission, may make a new Bishop of O——d, notwithstanding all Law to the contrary, tho' Your Lordship is in Possession; and this spurious Consecration must be Good and Valid; If Validities may be Determin'd without a Law or Rule.

§. XXXVIII. Your Lordship reckons, that the Doctrine of the Invalidity of a Baptism, Minister'd by one who never was Episcopally Ordain'd, runs Men into this Difficulty; that they cannot be sure of their Baptism; because tho' they were Baptiz'd by one Episcopally Ordain'd, yet that Minister, it may be, was not so Baptiz'd himself, and therefore, "*could not be a Christian Priest, nor could he Administer the Christian Sacraments.*" p. 17. This very Objection, my Lord, has been long since Answer'd in p. 129. of the Book Intitul'd, *Lay-Baptism Invalid*, 3d. Edition, before refer'd to; and I shall only add, that tho', as I have always said, 'tis certainly necessary that a Man should be a Baptiz'd Christian himself before he should be

a Priest, yet it wants to be prov'd, that the Baptism of the Person to be *Ordain'd* is an *Essential* Part of the *Institution* of *Ordination*; 'till that shall be made good, it do's not appear to me, that the *Ordination* of a Person otherwise duly Qualify'd, but not first Baptiz'd, is a *Nullity*: For I take *no* such *Act* to be Null, when it is not Destitute of an *Essential* Part of the *Institution* which appoints the *Act*. That the Minister should be Baptiz'd is certainly Necessary; but this Necessity is with respect to himself, if he can have Baptism: It wants to be prov'd, that this Necessity of his being Baptiz'd affects the Church more in the *Essence* of things, as he is a *Minister*, than it do's, as he is a Private Christian: If it affects the Church more in the *Essence* of Things as he is as *Minister*, then 'twill follow, that his being Baptiz'd, has an *inseperable* *Essential* Relation to his Commission by the *Institution* of *Ordination*; but how this appears from the *Institution* of *Ordination* is yet a Secret.

§. XXXIX. St. Paul, 'tis certain, was *validly* *Ordain'd* before he was Baptiz'd: He indeed (as all other Men ought to be) was Baptiz'd for his own Personal Benefit, that *his Sins might be wash'd away*; Ananias gave him that for the reason of his being Baptiz'd; and we hear of nothing, either in that History, or any other Part of the Sacred Canon, that

that Baptism was requir'd to make a Commission Valid. I call *St. Paul's Ordination Valid*, even before he was Baptiz'd, because his being Baptiz'd do's not appear to be any *Act of Ordination*. And tho' he executed not his Commission, till after his Baptism, yet, when he did execute it, he did it by Virtue of that Commission which he had receiv'd before Baptism; for we find him executing his Office without any *new Ordination*, which, doubtless, he must not have done, if his first Ordination had been a Nullity, for want of a previous Baptism—— Either it was *Null* before, or it was *Valid*; if it was *Null*, Then how could his after-Baptism give it Validity? *i. e.* How could Baptism alone, give a Commission to him who had *none* before? Not at all. If it was *Valid* before, Then what could his after-Baptism add to it, as to its *Essence*? Nothing certainly, So that all that can be inferr'd from *St. Paul's* receiving Baptism, as soon as possible after he had receiv'd his Commission, is, that 'tis indecorous and unbecoming, nay, wicked too, for a Minister of Christ to neglect and disregard that Baptism, which he is bound, by his Commission, to press upon others Consciences, as necessary to their Salvation; That 'tis as necessary for his own Salvation, to receive that Sacrament, as 'tis for their Salvation, that they should receive it; and, that his Commission will not entitle him to be Sav'd, by Virtue thereof, but he must submit

submit to, and perform the same Injunctions which God has Impower'd him to lay on others, &c.

§. XL. Hence, I hope, 'tis not Presumption to say, That if St. Paul could not have procur'd Baptism as soon as he did, his Baptizing of others would have been good and valid, tho' he had been without Baptism himself; and for this reason, because the Baptism receiv'd by the Minister, confers no Baptism on me for his having received it, any more than his having receiv'd the Sacrament of the Eucharist makes me to have receiv'd it. If he has a Commission to give me this latter Sacrament, tho' he never receiv'd it himself, he conveys it to me by his *Commission*; and there is no reason why the same should not be in the other Sacrament of Baptism.

§. XLI. It may be difficult to perswade some, that a Non-christian can make a true Christian; but all the Difficulty lies, in their not rightly considering the Nature of a Commission; for its Nature is such, as that it makes the Act done, by Virtue thereof, to be the Act of that Sovereign who gave the Commission: Now, if in the Nature of Things, there is *no Contradiction* in a Sovereign's giving out Commissions to Persons who are not incorporated Members of his Kingdom, if such Persons Acts can be fairly inter-

interpreted to be the Acts of that Sovereign who authoriz'd 'em, as most certainly they may, then there do's not appear to be any Contradiction in a *Non-christian's* Act of inrolling a Member into the Christian Society, by Virtue of a Commission from the Sovereign of that Society; any more than there would be in an unfree Chamberlain of *London's* Incorporating Men into the Freedom of this City, by Virtue of a Commission receiv'd by him for that purpose, from those Higher Powers who have Authority to give Chamberlains their Commission.

§. XLII. Your Lordship is so very sensible, that the *Institution* of Baptism requires, that he who Ministers it should be vested with the Divine Commission, and that whosoever has not this Commission, is an Intruder when he offers to Baptize; that Your Lordship breaks out into this just Exclamation against such Practices, in these Words: "*But what then? Am I pleading for these Irregular Practices, or Justifying these Intruding Administrators? God forbid: Fieri non debet, these Things ought not to be; and they will be answerable to God, and his Church, who usurp an Office to which they were not called.*" But then, my Lord, the calling of these Practices by the Name of *Irregular*, without acknowledging against *what Law* they are so, leaves

leaves Men in the dark; because they are not from hence enabled to discover the Heinousness of the *Irregularity*; for a Thing may be *Irregular* when done *only* against a Human, Circumstantial Law: And for such *Irregularities* as these, Men are answerable to God and his Church; and therefore they are not to be pleaded for—God forbid they should: I hope Your Lordship do's not mean, that *these Irregularities*, for which you would not plead; these *Intruding Administrators*, which Your Lordship would *not justify*; are Offences against *Human Laws* only: Sure Your Lordship does not esteem the Law of Man to be the *only Rule* that these *Irregularities* have a respect to, the *only Law* against which they are Transgressions; for, if that were all, then the Commission to Baptize, would be *Only of Human Original*: I verily believe, that Your Lordship abhors this Notion; and, that You hold the Commission to Baptize to be a Divine Law; that Your Lordship reckons these *Irregularities*, these *Usurpations*, to be Sins against the Law of God himself, who requires Men to be Vested with his Commission to Baptize; and that *therefore* these *Intruding Administrators*, will be answerable to God and his Church—To God, because they violate his own Law, the very *Institution* of Baptism (for that's his Law about the Commission;) and then to God and his Church, because they break the Church's Law, which
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restrains the Commission, and excludes them from it: The Law of God, concerning the Commission, my Lord, is an *Essential Part* of the Institution of Baptism; 'tis as *positive*, as *durable*, and as *binding*, as any other Part of that Institution.

§.XLIII. What can we then say to Your Lordship's following Words, concerning the contrary *Irregularities* and *Usurpations*, which are these, *pag. 18.* "All that I contend for, is, that *Factum valet*; That a Person, who has been seriously Baptiz'd, in or with Water, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (tho' the Baptizer was not an Episcopally Ordain'd Minister) ought not to be Baptiz'd again"—[i. e. to repeat Your Lordship's own Words; Tho' these things ought not to be, and they will be answerable to God and his Church, who usurp an Office to which they were not called;"] yet Persons thus Baptiz'd against the Laws of God, and his Church, ought not to be Baptiz'd again; who that considers this, my Lord, but must stand amaz'd and confounded. An *Essential Law* of God, is transgress'd; *fieri non debet*, 'tis true, the Sin ought not to be committed; but *Factum Valet*, 'tis Good and Valid when done! Will *fieri non debet Factum Valet*, salve so great a Difficulty as this, when it will not serve in Multitudes of Cases of a much more inferior Nature? How many Instances of Secular Concern

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may be produc'd, to which this ambiguous Rule will not answer? Ought we not to distinguish very exactly, before we admit it to be our Guide? Is there not an infinite Difference between *Laws Circumstantial*, and *Laws Essential*? Will this Rule serve, in Cases that are contrary to the Latter, tho' it may in some which are Breaches of the Former? For Instance, When a Priest Marries a Couple in *uncanonical Hours*, without a Dispensation for so doing, *fieri non debet*, it ought not to be done, there's a Transgression against a Circumstantial Law of the Church; yet, *Factum Valet*, 'tis Valid when done: But why? Because no Essential, but a Circumstantial Law only, has been transgress'd; and therefore, the Marriage stands good, because nothing was done against the *Essential* Institution of Marriage: The like, concerning Marriages, without publishing the Banns, or taking out a License. So again, A Priest Christening a healthy Child at Home, or without God-fathers and God-mothers, and a thousand other such Instances that may be brought, wherein *Circumstantial Laws* only are transgress'd, and the Acts stand Good and Valid; but, on the other hand, when there happens to be a Breach upon an *Essential Law*, then the Act is Null and Void: As for Example, A Man is Married, and yet, contrary to the Essential Law or Institution of Marriage, procures himself to be Married, with all the

the Exactness of Circumstances imaginable, to a Second Wife, during the Life of the First: Here Your Lordship's Rule fails; Tho' the Act is done, 'tis Null and Void; because the Essential Institution of Marriage, is broken—— So again, If a Priest publicly, and with all other Circumstances requir'd, Baptizes one with *Water*, but not in the Name of the Trinity, the Baptism is Null; because the *Essential Law* of Baptism, the Institution is broken. And therefore here also Your Lordship's Rule fails; as it, for the self same reason, do's when there is no Commission'd Administrator, because the Commission also is an *Essential Part* of the Institution of Baptism; which is also an Answer to Your Lordship's following Words, concerning the *Essentials of Baptism*, and the Church's last Rubrick, in the Office for Private Baptism: All which has been largely treated of, as also the Church's not requiring Anti-Episcopal Baptisms to be repeated—— In an Answer to one, who insisted upon the same things as Your Lordship does— Intituled, *Dissenters*, and other *unauthoriz'd Baptisms*, Null and Void; before mentioned.

§. XLIV. I might here make some Remarks upon Your Lordship's *Appendix*, which introduces Archbishop *Whitgift*, Archbishop *Bancroft*, Bishop *Bilson*, Bishop *Cosin*, Mr. *Hooker*, *Mason*, *Thorndike*, and others: But all their seeming Arguments have been

answer'd in the Three Books before referr'd to, and some of them in this Paper; as for any thing else, their bare *ipse dixit*, is not of sufficient Weight in this important Matter: When Men only assert, we must have leave to enquire, Whether they have good Reason and Argument to back their Assertions: For the Certainty of a Man's Baptism, is no Trifle; 'tis a Thing of the highest Consequence, and more worth searching into, than the Certainty of a Title to the greatest and richest Worldly Inheritance whatsoever.

§. XLV. Is Archbishop *Whitgift's* inconsistent Saying, p. i, ii. answer'd in p. viii, ix, x, xi. of the Preface to the 3d Edition of *Lay-Baptism Invalid*, sufficient to satisfy the doubtful Conscience?

Is Bishop *Bancroft's* Instance of the 3000 Baptiz'd in a Day, *Acts 2.* quoted by Your Lordship in *Appendix*, p. iii. and answer'd, in *Dissenters Baptism, Null and Void*, p. 31. a good Argument that *Lay-men* Baptiz'd them, when in truth the Twelve Apostles were then at the Place, and could Baptize twice that Number, in less than a Day, with as great Ease as we frequently see One Bishop Confirm above 500 Persons, in less than Three or Four Hours time; or as Two Clergy-men, in Two or Three Hours time, in populous Parishes, Administer both Bread and Wine to above 500 Communicants, and all

all these with much longer Forms of Words than the Form of Baptism is ?

Will Bishop *Bilfon*'s suppos'd Rule, " *That the Minister is not of the Essence of the Sacrament*, Append. p. iv. Answer'd in 1st, 2d, and 3d Propositions of *Lay-Baptism Invalid*; and in p. 38, to 47. of *Dissenter's Baptism Null and Void*; satisfie Men, who plainly discover by the Institution, that the Minister is of the *Essence* of the Administration of the Sacrament ?

Will Bishop *Cosin*'s Presbyterian Notion of Ordination, Append. p. iv. satisfie those who esteem Episcopacy to be of *Divine Right* ?

Can *Hooker*'s Assertions, without any Proof, Append. p. iv. convince a Man who wants to have a rational Certainty of his Baptism ?

Is not Mr. *Mason*'s Supposition; of the Validity of Presbyterian and Lay-Ordinations, Append. p. vi. a direct Opposition to the present Law of our Church, which nulls those pretended Ordinations ?

Can Mr. *Thorndike*'s Quotation of *Tertullian*, *de Baptismo*, for the Validity of Lay-Baptism, Append. p. vii. be a *Conclusive Argument*; when as learned Men as *Thorndike*, affirm, that 'twas only *Tertullian*'s private Opinion, and makes nothing for the Validity thereof ?

Is Your Lordship's Quotation of Archbishop *Abbot*, any more than shewing us his Grace's bare *ipse dixit*; that he says, without

without proving, concerning a Lay-man's Baptizing, That tho' *Malè factum est*, yet *Factum est*, as if the Baptism was really and validly perform'd, plainly begging the Question to be prov'd? And then running to the false Maxim, already refuted, "*Multa Fieri non debent, quæ tamen facta valent*," without distinguishing what sort of things these *Multa* are, which ought not to be done; and which yet, when done, are good and valid. Does not his Grace run into the same Inconstancy which Arch-Bishop Whitgift did; *Si quis id, quod non oportuit, usurpavit, id agenti, & non patienti vertendum est vitio*, p. x. As if the Crime would only be charg'd on him who made the Usurpation, and he who encouraged or knowingly acquiesced in it, had no share in so great an Iniquity.

Will Bishop Fell's Note, p. xi. on the Council of Carthage, in p. 244. of St. Cyprian, concerning the Baptism of Hereticks, who were certainly in *Episcopal Orders*, reach the Case of Baptism by Men who never had a Commission from Bishops to Baptize?

Must Your Lordship's Quotation from St. Augustin, p. xii. be Decisive in this great Question; when that Saint Hesitates so much upon the Matter, that, speaking of the repeating of a Baptism, suppos'd to be given by a Layick, in a Case of Extremity, he says, *Nescio an pie quisquam dixerit, esse repetendum?* If he had been sure that 'twas

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an Error, to require the repeating of the Act of Baptization; would he have said, *Nescio, I know not*; could he have said, concerning such a Baptism, "*Aut nullum, aut veniale delictum est*:" If it had been a Universal Tradition in his Days. Who can believe that he would have been thus doubtful about a Catholick Allowance; and say, *either it is no Sin, or else 'tis but a Venial one*? Sure, he would not have granted it to be any Sin at all, if it had been so generally allow'd, as some would make us believe.

And what Satisfaction can any one receive in Your Lordship's Quotation from *Optatus*, p. xiii. when his *Quisquis baptizaverit Apostolorum Opus implevit*; if taken in the Universal Sense, without Limitation, gives even Unbaptized *Jews* and *Pagans* a Power to Baptize, tho' never Commission'd for that Sacred Function?

§. XLVI. Upon the whole, my Lord, Is there any one Argument, either in Your Lordship's *Charge*, or *Appendix*, but what has been abundantly Answer'd, even before Your Lordship's *Charge* was Publish'd? Is not the Invalidity of Lay-Baptism, a Question that requires a more laborious Work, than that of producing particular Mens Opinions to determin it? Is it not necessary, for the Merits of the Cause fairly to be discussed, while Men hold such different Opinions about it? Certainly it is; for without this,
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we shall never be determin'd on either side, of the Question, except by meer Chance we hit upon the right: For, as our Church, in her 21st Article, affirms, That Councils themselves "may Err, and sometimes have Err'd, in things pertaining to God:" So, much more may we say, That Men, and very Great Men to, may Err, and have often Err'd, by departing from **Their Rule**, the Sacred Canon of Holy Scripture. And when they do so, as Your Lordship justly observes, p. 8. "No one knows whither they may go at last; and there are hardly any things so absurd, ——— but some People will be found, who being led by ——— **Admiration of the Person of the Authors,** easily fall into them.

§. XLVII. My Lord, This of the Validity of Baptism, by Persons who never were Commission'd to Baptize, is of that vast Importance, that the whole Sacerdotal Power must signifie nothing if that Doctrine be true; for 'tis as easy to prove that Preaching, Administring the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Absolution and Excommunication are Valid, when attempted by those who *never were Commission'd*, to Exercise those Sacred Functions, as 'tis to prove the Validity of their Sprinkling, or Washing, let the Experiment be made when it will.

I beg

I beg leave to inform Your Lordship, that since some late Attempts to defend these latter false Ministrations, since they have been apologiz'd for by some of the Spiritual Guides of our Church, particularly within these Four Weeks last past, there have been Instances in the Country, of Peoples hectoring their Parish-Priests and Curates, telling them, that if they will not Baptize their Children at their Houses, even when there is no Danger in carrying them to Church, they will do it themselves, now they have been inform'd, by those who know as much as they do; that if they Baptize their Children themselves, it will be as good, and as secure a Baptism, as if the Priest perform'd it himself. This is not an Invention of mine, but Matter of Fact; and, by a Letter from Oxford, I am credibly inform'd, That since the Publication of Mr. Bingham's Book (to which several Answers are preparing) the Presbyterian Teacher in Oxford, publicly Baptiz'd a Child in the Meeting-house; which was carried thither in as great Form and Order, as if it had been to Church: A Thing which my Reverend and Learned Author, believes was never heard of there before: "But, says he, see the Consequence of ———'s, and other great Men, within the Church, their pleading the Cause of those that are without it."

§. XLVIII. Thus, my Lord, we already Experience, the fatal effects of Church-mens defending the Validity of such Usurpers Ministrations! Thus we find, how ineffectual Your Lordship's forewarning of them will be, for tho' Your Lordship's has said, "*these Things ought not to be; and they will be answerable to God and his Church, who Usurp an Office to which they were not call'd*", p. 18. Yet so strongly does the remembrance of *Factum Valet*, 'tis good and Valid when done, prevail over all Dissuasives from meddling in such Sacred Things, that even the very Members of our Church, begin to fly in the face of God's Ministers, if they will not comply with their Irregularities; and threaten to Execute the Sacred Office themselves, without them, as if the Divine Character in God's Ministers signified nothing at all; and their Authority and Power no more than meer Matter of *Circumstantial Form*, and outward Ceremony of Man's devising.

What will be the End of these Things? How shall the Clergy be enabled to put in Execution, Your Lordship's pious Council, and constantly to Practice what Your Lordship recommends to them, viz. "*a Careful and punctual Observance of the Rubricks and Canons, in their Reading of Divine Service and Administration of the Sacraments*", p. 19. What can the Clergy do in this Case if Lay-men, Men
never

never Commission'd! can Minister *Valid Sacraments*? Will such Lay-men mind the Clergy's Ministrations? Will they not rather forsake them, if they offer to Cross their Humour with respect to any of the Rubrics? Your Lordship justly exclaims against, "*using the Office of Publick Baptism in Private Houses, and other Irregularities which may draw People after a Minister, and gain him the Applause of such as are gratified by his forsaking his Rule*—— And that such *Uncanonical Practices* give offence to those—— who have regard to their Subscriptions and Sacred Promises at their Ordination, p. 20. But notwithstanding all this, my Lord, Those Lay-men who are puff'd up with a Notion of the Validity of their own false Ministrations, will obstruct all the pious Endeavours of Your Lordship and the Clergy to Reform such Irregularities; and they'll have no regard to the *Rule, Canons and Subscriptions*, which Your Lordship piously reminds the Clergy of, while they esteem themselves to have no need of the Clergy's *Ministration of Sacraments*, since some, even of the Clergy, do Teach them, that their own Lay-Ministrations, are sufficient to all the purposes of Christian Sacraments. I humbly hope, the Clergy will seriously think on these Things, and magnifie their Office after the piously Zealous Example of the Blessed St. Paul,

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that they will guard the Sacred Ministrations, and therein the Divine Authority of our Blessed Lord and Saviour, from the Sacrilegious Attempts of the Hands of Wicked and Ignorant Men; and, by their Writing, Preaching, and Administrations, secure to us the *real Instituted Sacraments*, that we may not be put off, and wretchedly deceiv'd, with such false and spurious Ones as never were appointed. And I beg leave humbly to remind the Reverend Clergy, of a Rubrick which tends very much to promote that Reverence and Esteem, we, of the Laity, ought to entertain of their Sacred Function, and of the Holy Oblation in the Lord's-Supper; which is, in abundance of Churches, very scandalously disregarded by Ignorant Lay-Clerks, and Old Sexton Women: And 'tis this, in the Communion-Service, just after the *Deacons, Churchwardens, &c.* have reverently brought the *Alms, and other Devotions of the People* to the Priest, who is requir'd humbly to present, and place them upon the *Holy Table*, I say, just after this, the Church expressly Commands thus, "*The Priest shall then place upon the Table so much Bread and Wine, as he shall think sufficient, [i. e. for the Communion;]*" *after which done, the Priest shall say, &c.*" Then follows the Prayer for Christ's Church, in which God is beseech'd to accept those same Alms, and those same Oblations of Bread and Wine.

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This Part of the Priest's Office of placing upon the Table the Bread and Wine, is intollerably invaded by the Clerks and Sextons, Lay-men and Women, to the great Scandal of many devout Communicants, who have a right Sense of the Honour and Dignity of the *Christian Priesthood* and *Oblation*, and of our Church's Rubricks; and that this is a direct Breach of the very Letter of this Rubrick, which expressly requires the Priest to perform this Sacerdotal Act himself. To say, that 'tis enough if the Priest causes the Bread and Wine to be set there, and that this will answer the Design of the Rubrick, is to make the whole Communion-Service liable to the same Lay-Invasion now complain'd of; for the Priest may as well cause that whole Service to be said by Lay-men, and thereby comply with the Rubricks, which require the Priest to say it, as he may cause the other to be done by Lay-Persons, when himself is requir'd to do it. Why cannot the Lay Church-Wardens set the Alms upon the Altar? The Answer is short, The Priest is required to do it; and so he is to set the Bread and Wine thereon too: And the Reason is plain, because 'tis his Office only, to Offer such Gifts and Oblations to God, by setting them on his Altar, being thereunto Ordain'd and Appointed.

§. XLIX. But to conclude; I humbly Hope, my Lord, that in this Address, I have preserv'd

The Invalidity, &c.

serv'd my self free from any undutiful Expressions, and said nothing contrary to that humble Respect, which is due from me to Your Lordship's Sacred Character: I am sure I have endeavour'd to be thus Dutiful; and, if any thing to the contrary has slip'd from me, I sincerely profess, 'twas without Design; and, as soon as I shall discover it, I will heartily, by God's Grace, repent thereof in Dust and Ashes, as well knowing, that the Spiritual Princes of the Church of Christ, ought not to be vilified upon any pretext whatsoever; and that even Truth it self must suffer by such base, and, I may say, *anti-christian* Behaviour in its Asserters, and, particularly, if found in one who professes himself to be,

My LORD,

*A sincere Lover of Your Lordship's
most Sacred Order;*

Lond.

15. Dec. 1712.

And Your Lordship's

most Humble and

Obedient Servant,

R. L.

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